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ABSTRACT

Infants and toddlers like to crawl, climb, run, and explore in wide open, outdoor spaces. This publication provides ideas for day care providers on using outdoor play to facilitate learning in infants and toddlers. Section 1 discusses the benefits of daily outdoor play, including learning to interact with others, practicing language skills, thinking and problem-solving, and promoting healthy growth and development. Section 2 considers preparing infants and toddlers for outdoor play, including scheduling and getting ready to go outdoors. Section 3 presents tips for keeping infants and toddlers safe outdoors, including preventing falls and entrapments, identifying and removing outdoor hazards, and repairing and maintaining play areas. Section 4 provides suggestions for multisensory experiences for infants and toddlers, and Section 5 describes picnics and outdoor snack ideas. Also considered in this publication are incorporating literacy experiences and technology in outdoor play and learning. The publication concludes with a letter to families about the benefits of outdoor play and learning. (Contains 21 references.) (KDFB)

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